

CONTROL SUMMER PATCH IN TURF FOR A HEALTHY LOOKING LAWN

What is it?

Summer patch is caused by a soil born fungus, magnaporthe poae. Anytime the daytime temperatures added to the relative humidity equal or exceed 180, the fungus becomes active in the soil and causes susceptible grass roots to stop taking up moisture and collapse. The turf will turn tan or straw colored even if proper soil moisture exists. Summer patch killed turf does not pull up or separate from its roots. This fungus is not spread by foot traffic, mower blades, or atmospheric movement. Summer patch occurs in Nebraska from mid-June through September. Cultural conditions that enhance the development of the fungus include heavy thatch; low mowing height in midsummer, unbalanced fertility, light frequent watering, soil compaction, sites exposed to heat, steep slopes and poorly adapted grass varieties.

What to Look For

Affected turf initially shows scattered patches of bluish-green, wilted plants, which are usually not detected until infected plants begin to die. The patches are roughly circular, crescent shaped or serpentine shapes. Young patches will vary in diameter. Older patches appear as 1-2' rings of dead grass around tufts of healthy grass. Infected crowns and roots appear dark brown in contrast to the white color of healthy roots and crowns. Cultural practices integrated with fungicide treatment are necessary.

Cultural Practices

- Avoid early spring and summer high nitrogen fertilization.
- Don't fertilize turf before April 15th.
- Develop a fall fertilization program supplemented with a light 1/2 rate mid-summer fertilization
- Syringe (cool with water) the heart exposed turf during mid-day in July and August.

- Apply granulated turf fungicide late April, late May, and late June.
- Over-seed with improved grass cultivars in early fall.
- Thatch one 1/2" causes stress to the turf that will make it more susceptible to summer patch.
- Use Soil Activator both spring and fall after aeration to reduce the thatch and its stress on turf.

Seed Cultivars

Using the best cultivars available to Lanoha Nurseries, we offer several excellent blends of the bluegrass varieties that show great disease resistance. We also offer several fine leaf perennial ryegrass and fine fescue cultivars.

Effective Treatments

Granular products: Bayer Fungus Control for Lawns (Triadimefon) or Fertilome F-Stop (Myclobutanil).

Liquid products: Fertilome Liquid Systemic Fungicide (Propiconazole) and F-Stop.

**Granular and liquid applications provide the same results, always follow label instructions.

